

Top Secret



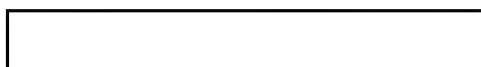
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ISRAEL: The fedayeen attack on the Israeli town of Qiryat Shemona yesterday is likely to elicit Israeli reprisals against fedayeen strongholds in southern Lebanon. Tel Aviv recently has avoided such reprisals lest they endanger peace negotiations; the government will probably not allow political considerations to deter action in this case because of the substantial number of Israeli civilian casualties.

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The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command, a small terrorist group based in Lebanon, has claimed responsibility for the attack.

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The General Command is not a constituent member of the Palestine Liberation Organization, nor is it closely tied to any Arab government. However, it receives some financial and operational support from Libya, Iraq, and private Persian Gulf sources.

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USSR: Academician Sakharov, in a retort to exiled novelist Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn on April 3, has moved away from total confrontation with the regime. He now supports detente while still dissenting on the lack of democratization in the Soviet Union. His new position provides a badly needed focal point for reformist forces in Soviet society and finds partial common ground with the "modernizers" in the regime itself.

The text of the statement, issued in response to Solzhenitsyn's "Letter to the Soviet Leaders" last September, is not yet available in Washington. The US Embassy, which has read it, sees it as an elaboration of the dialogue developing in dissident ranks, differentiating the inward-looking orthodox nationalists (Solzhenitsyn) from the outward-looking modernists (Sakharov, Roy Medvedev, et al). The embassy reads this dialogue as a reflection of the divergence in Soviet society between the Westward-looking modernizers at one end of the spectrum and the conservative, isolationist nationalists at the other.

It is possible to see these two strains of thought also reflected in the different degrees of enthusiasm for detente among Soviet leaders and in the contradictions of Soviet policy. Thus, the regime is encouraging Western-style modernization through detente, while trying to maintain all barriers against democratization. Sakharov adopted a very dangerous strategy last year when he divorced himself from all aspects of the regime's policy by arguing against trade unless it was accompanied by democratization. Now in supporting detente--albeit ultimately for reasons of democratization--he moves back closer to official opinion and his words gain added weight.

According to the embassy, Sakharov has provided a strong and balanced counterargument to Solzhenitsyn's views on the future development of Soviet--and for Solzhenitsyn principally Russian--society.

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While Solzhenitsyn disdains scientific progress and plumps for a simple, authoritarian society based on Russian nationalism and the ideas of the Russian Orthodox Church, Sakharov rejects mysticism and over-emphasis on ideology, and argues in practical terms for harnessing science to serve and better the lot of mankind and for expanding the contacts between the Soviet Union and the West.

Sakharov sees no absolute good in Russian traditional values, in contrast to Solzhenitsyn's mystical belief in them, and argues that Soviet democratic activists should be equally concerned about the suppression of non-Russian peoples in the Soviet Union. He takes Solzhenitsyn to task for his view that an authoritarian system, based on the benevolent patriarchy of the church, would be most suitable and healthy for the country. Sakharov states his belief that only in a democratic system can national and human character be developed fully. He sees no insurmountable barriers to the possibilities for democratic development, either in Russian history or in the Russian character.

Sakharov is particularly hard on Solzhenitsyn for arguing that Russia needs to pull away from the evil influence of the West and to develop itself in splendid and simple isolation. He reasons that the world's problems are so immense that one nation cannot solve them alone, and he mentions a variety of issues ranging from disarmament to environmental protection in which international cooperation is essential. Sakharov makes a strong case, in this respect, for expanded trade, scientific and cultural exchanges, free travel into and outside the country, and free movement of people and ideas across national boundaries. He relates this to the development of a more democratic system in the Soviet Union, and brings in his theory of the convergence of Soviet and Western societies to argue that both voluntary measures and outside pressures can act as catalysts for beneficial change.

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EC-SYRIA: Syrian officials have expressed strong interest in establishing formal links with the European Community. During EC Commissioner Cheysson's recent visit to Damascus, the Syrians declared that they were prepared for immediate negotiations to broaden economic cooperation with the community.

Syrian interest in ties with the EC may reflect President Asad's efforts to balance off the heavy Soviet economic presence with Western aid. Syria has struck a number of bilateral deals with the West since the last major Soviet credit agreement in 1972. Now that other Arab states have granted Syria considerable financial aid, Damascus may be interested in negotiating additional multilateral development projects. Commission sources in Brussels report that the Syrians offered the EC a long list of projects from which to choose.

Until recently, the Syrians have shown little interest in EC efforts to formulate an overall policy that would give the Mediterranean states preferential access to community markets and provide development aid. During Cheysson's visit, however, Syrian officials expressed great interest in the present status of the EC's Mediterranean policy and particularly the status of negotiations with the Maghreb countries.

Syrian officials insisted that Cheysson sign a document on behalf of the commission that would express understanding for Syria's desire to reach agreement with the community on preferential access to community markets; technical, scientific, and industrial cooperation; and EC financial participation in Syrian development projects. Although Cheysson had no mandate to negotiate and had expected only informal discussions, he signed the document because it merely embodied the outline of existing EC Mediterranean policy.

The commission may propose to the EC Council that formal exploratory talks be opened with both Syria and Jordan, but the timing of such a step is not clear.

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The community's negotiations with the Maghreb states and with Spain and Israel have been stalemated by differences among the Nine. EC agreements with these states will probably not be concluded before fall at the earliest, and EC talks with eastern Mediterranean Arab states will not be permitted to get ahead of the negotiations with the western Mediterranean countries.

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*BELGIUM: Negotiations for a new Belgian Government broke down last night over the sensitive issues of regional autonomy and educational reform. Formateur Leo Tindemans will report to the King today.

Reports earlier this week indicated that Tindemans' powerful Social Christian Party had reached tentative agreement with the Socialists on these and other crucial issues. A new two-party coalition was expected to be in office by Easter. A strong element within the Socialist Party, however, may have forced the Socialist negotiators to make demands that were known to be unacceptable to the Social Christians.

If Tindemans is unable to bring the Socialists back to the negotiating table, he may attempt to form a minority government with the conservative Liberal Party. This could be done if he had the formal or the tacit support of the linguistic parties, but it would create serious strains among the Social Christians. Such a coalition would be highly unstable.

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*Because of the shortage of time for preparation of this item, the analytic interpretation presented here has been produced by the Central Intelligence Agency without the participation of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State.

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*UGANDA: President Idi Amin may be losing control of the Ugandan Army to the factions that opposed him in the fighting which took place on March 23-24.

Amin's opponents are predominantly Christians, and many belong to the Lugbara and Madi tribes. They appear to have emerged in a stronger position than first appeared to be the case from last month's clashes with soldiers from Amin's Kakwa tribe and allied tribesmen brought in from Sudan. Amin's opponents forced him to dismiss Brigadier Husayn Malera as acting army chief of staff, and are now pressing him for further concessions.

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Amin reportedly brought a contingent of 400 Libyan troops into Uganda early this week, presumably to serve as a bodyguard. Libyan President Qadhafi sent Libyan troops to aid Amin in late 1972, at which time serious friction developed between Libyan and Ugandan soldiers. If 400 Libyan troops have in fact arrived, their presence may further anger the Ugandan soldiers.

Mounting tensions may spur a spontaneous assassination attempt against Amin which, if successful, almost certainly would touch off extensive fighting between tribally based factions in the army.

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*ETHIOPIA: There have been further outbreaks of unrest among security forces and labor groups as these elements press the government for action on their demands for the dismissal of corrupt officials and for wage increases.

Police units in recent days have stepped up their protests against unpopular officers, harsh working conditions, and maladministration. Enlisted men in the port city of Massawa, on the Red Sea coast, arrested their officers on April 8. Members of a police unit in Harar Province temporarily held their officers captive earlier this week and forced the appointment of a new commanding officer. Police at two other locations in Harar have expressed dissatisfaction with their officers.

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Junior officers and NCOs of the Tenth Mechanized Brigade in Jijiga, the army's most prestigious unit, have held the city since April 9 and have arrested several senior officers and some customs officials for alleged corruption. The dissidents are also unhappy with their recently appointed commander. The mechanized brigade's action, after the Third Division successfully forced the removal of the deputy chief of staff last weekend, indicates the military is demonstrating its strength as a reminder to the government not to falter in carrying out promised changes.

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Addis Ababa municipal employees, construction workers, bus drivers, and railroad employees are on strike for better pay and working conditions. Health Department employees and the staff of the governorate general are striking in Asmara. Railroad strikers have sabotaged some equipment. Strikers in the capital have forced the resignation of the mayor of Addis Ababa, whom they have accused of corruption.

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CHINA: Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping's speech to the special session of the UN General Assembly on April 10 broke little new ground and essentially restated moderate themes that have characterized China's description of the international situation for several years. Detente with the US emerged intact, and Teng reserved his fire for the USSR, which he denounced in uncompromising terms. Teng stated that the current political campaign in China was intended to prevent China from becoming an aggressive "superpower," thus implying that foreigners should not interpret the campaign as an ominous development. Throughout the speech, Teng echoed Chou En-lai's analysis of international affairs as the Premier had described them in the keynote address to the Tenth Party Congress last August.

The special session of the assembly obviously affords China an ideal forum in which to emphasize solidarity with Third World nations, and Teng took full advantage of the occasion to curry favor among the "have-not" states, explicitly placing China itself in that category.

He attacked both superpowers for using their economic strength to "plunder" the Third World and retard its economic development. Hewing to the now-standard Chinese analysis, he attributed the unrest in the world to the superpowers, accusing them of competing for hegemony throughout the world. Teng focused his attack, however, on the USSR, which he singled out as being especially vicious, unscrupulous, perfidious, and self-seeking. All Teng's examples of superpower misdeeds referred to the USSR. His criticism of the US was generally indirect and the mildest possible under the circumstances. While this expresses a standard Chinese line, Teng's harsh criticism of the Soviets was also intended to remind Third World countries that their attention during the special session should be directed toward the Soviets as well as toward the developed countries of the West.

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There was no hint in the speech that domestic criticism of accepting foreign aid and technology, which has surfaced during the political campaign in China, had forced a change in Chinese policy. While re-emphasizing standard Chinese views on the necessity for self-reliance in economic development, Teng pointedly cautioned that self-reliance does not mean "self-seclusion" and rejection of foreign aid. Rather, such assistance and trade, if equitably arranged, were characterized as beneficial and necessary for the development of independent national economies.

Teng asserted that US-Soviet detente was a myth overshadowed by the larger fact of superpower rivalry, and that balanced reduction of forces and strategic arms limitation "are nothing but empty talk." By reasserting this line Teng was indirectly reaffirming that the policy of improved relations with the US remains viable.

Reflecting Peking's anger at Soviet efforts to arrange a world Communist meeting that will almost certainly be directed against China, Teng attempted to blunt any ideological criticism that might emerge in such a meeting by declaring that the USSR's shift to "social imperialism" means that the "socialist camp" no longer exists.

Teng combined his exposition on superpower rivalry with strong support of Third World economic goals, but in general terms that contained few specifics. He aligned China with demands for higher prices for the underdeveloped countries' raw materials, national control of resources and economies "up to and including" nationalization, and a "thorough change" in international economic relations. He explicitly endorsed Arab use of the "oil weapon" as a good example of what developing countries must do to fight imperialism, and suggested that nations producing raw materials form organizations similar to OPEC.

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If Teng's speech was a major effort at aligning China with Third World goals, his treatment of Europe and the oil weapon demonstrated a keen sense of the pitfalls inherent in the use of economic weapons and calls for struggles by poor nations against the rich. Expanding an idea long inherent in Chinese policy, Teng explicitly placed the industrial nations of Europe and Japan in a special category between the superpowers and the Third World, pointing out that Europe is the focus of superpower hegemony. He played down the "rich-vs-poor nation" theme and focused instead on national control of economies as an indispensable part of national sovereignty. In endorsing the oil weapon, Teng cautioned that Third World unity must be preserved and that equitable economic relations must be maintained among the developing countries.

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CHINA: The latest People's Daily editorial reiterates the call for a reasoned, controlled approach to the anti-Lin, anti-Confucius campaign, but seemingly unauthorized attacks on provincial leaders continue to spread.

Recent travelers have observed political wall posters criticizing a number of provincial party leaders, almost all of whom are military men. The most recent observations add several names to the growing list of leaders who have been attacked this year. Four of the eight individuals involved in the rotation of regional commanders last December have now been censured in their former provincial bases. The posters, which have been reported in at least six provinces, apparently continue to violate Central Committee directives issued earlier this year against criticism of individuals by name. Nonetheless, the impetus for the poster attacks almost certainly comes from elements in Peking.

The initial wave of poster attacks, like the criticisms of two politically offensive operas, appeared to be attempts by Chiang Ching, Mao's wife, and her radical associates to reorient the course of the anti-Lin, anti-Confucius campaign. The assaults on provincial figures may now have broadened to the point where both her allies and her opponents are involved.

For the first time, the poster criticisms name a ranking Peking leader who was the army's top political commissar. Party Vice Chairman Li Te-sheng, who was transferred to head the Shenyang Military Region, was attacked as a follower of Lin Piao in Anhwei, Li's bailiwick during the Cultural Revolution. Another first is the reported criticism of Kiangsu Province leaders by the leading mass organizations there--the trade union federation, youth league, peasants' association, and the like. A few attempts to pass the initiative for criticism to former Red Guard groups do not seem to have any steam behind them.

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It is becoming more evident that as the anti-Lin, anti-Confucius campaign progresses, elements in both the provinces and Peking are striving for control of the movement. Some posters in Kiangsu accuse provincial leaders there of having arrested a number of individuals for putting up wall posters, and the current spate of attacks in that province may have been triggered by this incident.

Posters in Fukien Province criticizing Han Hsien-chu, the former boss of that province who was transferred to northwest China at the end of last year, may have been inspired by more authoritative elements than those responsible for the attacks on Li Te-sheng and other officials in east China. A recent article in the party theoretical journal Red Flag, which seems to point an accusatory finger at Han, gives some official weight to the charges against him. Han has not appeared publicly in his new district since the beginning of the year.

Political wounds inflicted during the Cultural Revolution and its immediate aftermath are also being reopened. An important theme raised in at least two provinces concerns the so-called 516 Group, an ultra-leftist organization that was the object of a nationwide investigation and purge between early 1970 and the Lin crisis in September 1971. Leaders in Shantung and Kiangsu are being accused of using the 516 investigation to purge the wrong persons. The political left may have raised the 516 question as a means not only to criticize provincial power-holders but also to push for rehabilitation of extremists purged at the end of the Cultural Revolution. Thus far this issue seems to focus on internecine quarrels at the provincial level, but the fact that it has been raised in more than one province suggests that local malcontents may have been encouraged by elements in Peking.

The question of rehabilitation, however, is a double-edged sword. At both the national and provincial levels, it has been used thus far to resurrect party officials purged in the initial stages of the Cultural Revolution--to the discomfiture of the political left.

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The criticisms of provincial leaders are consistent with an ongoing effort to reduce the political power of the military, but they clearly involve much more. The immediate issue of who is to hold political power in the countryside is an integral part of the power struggle in Peking, which includes criticisms of the moderate policy line of the past few years. This contest will have an important effect on the succession to Mao and Chou.

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AUSTRALIA: Nearly 95 percent of Australia's wheat available for export this year has been committed. Canberra now has less than 500,000 tons left from the 7.4 million tons available to the wheat board for commercial export. An additional 225,000 tons have been reserved for food aid.

Australia, the world's third largest wheat exporter, has been able to supply its usual customers but has little left for new ones. Egypt, Japan, and China have purchased about 1 million tons each, and other Asian countries accounted for most of the rest.

While world production of wheat is expected to increase this year, the market is likely to remain tight. World stocks are low and, as a result, localized shortfalls will have to be met from current production. Now that Australia is effectively out of the wheat market until the next crop year, which begins in December, buyers must shift to other major suppliers, such as the US and Canada.

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FOR THE RECORD

Spain-USSR: Madrid is negotiating with the USSR for purchase of uranium-enrichment services worth more than \$200 million. If concluded, the deal would be Moscow's largest enrichment arrangement with a Western country. A contract is expected to be signed in mid-April; deliveries would begin in 1978 and continue through 1990.

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